

High Wind Warning: "Small Pockets" of Outages Possibly Caused by Thursday's Gusts

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ALTON – Ameren Illinois is experiencing “small pockets” of outages in both Madison and St. Clair Counties due to high winds in the area.

A High Wind Warning was issued for the St. Louis Metro Area by the National Weather Service (NWS), meaning gusts as high as 60 mph blew into the area from mid-morning

to mid-afternoon on Thursday. Gusts are expected to drop to 40 at their heights by Thursday evening, but those winds (which are a part of a “Bomb Cyclone” system from the Rockies) could cause damage to trees and power lines, meaning small outages caused by winds may occur throughout the area.

“Our crews are taking extra safety precautions because of the wind when replacing equipment and restoring power,” an email from an Ameren Illinois representative said. “Thankfully, many of the area trees do not have leaves just yet. Leaves can act like a sail and cause trees to twist, bend and break.”

While as of just before 2:30 p.m. Thursday there were no major damages caused to Ameren Illinois's power system in the Riverbend, a metal roof blew into power lines in Gilman, Illinois, which is a town just north of Champaign. This caused a bit more than 1,000 Ameren Illinois customers to be without power Thursday afternoon.

If someone encounters a downed line or fallen pole, they are told to call Ameren Illinois at 1-800-755-5000. Ameren Illinois advises people experiencing an outage after sunset to not go outside – as the downed line may not be able to be seen. They are also advised to stay away from bushes, shrubs and downed trees, which could conceal downed lines. Lines do not have to be sparking to be live.